ROCHEFORT.

His Lecture at the Academy of Music.

An Enthusiastic Audience Greets the Noted Exile.

PARIS IN 1870-1.

Scenes During the Siege at the Barricades.

LA MERE MICHEL.

Rochefort's Marriage in Prison.

Devotion and Heroism Shown by Two Children.

THE PERIOD OF EXILE

Notes on "the King of the Cannibal Islands."

The lecture delivered last night at the Academy of Music by the well known republican leader, Henri Rochefort, gave the American public an opportunity of becoming acquainted with that strangely gifted man. Owing, no doubt, to the fact that the lecture was delivered in a foreign language the attendance was not so large as might have been wished, but those who remained away lost a treat they are never likely to have an opportunity of enjoying, on this side of the Atlantic at least. Never in his most successful days, when warmed by the sympathetic applause of admiring thousands, did the French tribune deliver more telling hits against his political opponents than in the remarkable paper of which we place before our readers a translation. For those who had known M. Rochefort only by report as a violent and aggressive orator the delivery of the lecturer must have been a surprise. He was greeted, when he rose to speak, with deafening applause, again and again repeated; but at last the enthusiasm of the audience settled down, and the lecturer proceeded to read, in a quiet, unimpassioned voice, the story of his experiences during the siege of Paris, in exile on the barren peninsula; but perhaps the most telling and crushing part of his criticism on the political condition of France was his admirable comparison of the constitutional safeguards and educational advantages enjoyed by the Sandwich Islanders, a people we are accustomed to regard as savages, and yet who possess government incomparably freer and more responsible to the popular will than does the great French nation. Nothing was more remarkable than the absence of passion with which M. Rochefort put forward his ideas, and only when recounting the insults offered to the mother of his children—and which accelerated, if they did not cause, her death—was there any sign of emotion. Grave as was the orator, the aspect of the house was still more severe. There were present few ladies—one only appearing on the platform—and these were mostly in the boxes. The audience listened with rapt attention, and so profound was the silence, which was only broken on one occasion by an interruption from some

OVER-ENTHUSIASTIC ADMIRER,

which created a good deal of excitement. The remark of this person was not clearly understood by the audience, and as it was at first thought to be of an offensive character there seemed a chance that the interrupter would be summarily ejected. In a few words he explained his position as that of a man who had fought on the barricades. M. Rochefort saluted him and at the same time expressed his wish to be allowed to proceed without interruption. Although sedate and attentive the audience was full of suppressed enthusiasm, and when the speaker made his telling points they were acknowledged with a warmth that left no doubt as to their hearty sympathy with his utterances. The contrast drawn between the reign of constitutional liberty at Honolulu and the government of bayonets at Paris, and the admirable attack on the pretended sickness of Jules Favre, which was characterized as "an attack of capitulation," were, perhaps, most relished by the audience, which was a remarkably intelligent one. It was, however, fairly representative of the democratic Republic. It was curious to notice the appearance of the proscenium boxes, filled—not as we accustomed to see them, with richly-dressed ladies, but crowded with the determined faces of democratic republicans. Indeed, there was much in this incident to recall some of the old pictures of the old French Republic. The platform was well filled with men prominent in revolutionary affairs, and for the nonce all party feeling seemed to have been forgotten, and the various sections united in the common work of helping the suffering republicans exiled in New Caledonia. Messrs. M. Fleures, Durand, Pelletier and Debaschi represented the Union Républicaine, and MM. M. E. Badowreau, J. Ollivier and the brothers May. Mr. Miguel de Aldama, the representative of the Cuban Republic, occupied one of the proscenium boxes.

M. Rochefort, accompanied by some friends, appeared on the platform some minutes after eight, and the proceedings were at once opened by an address from Mr. John Swinton, one of the leaders of the American socialists.

MR. SWINTON SAID:—

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:—I have been asked by Henri Rochefort to briefly indicate in the English language the order and bearing of his discourse here to-night, for the benefit of those who are unfamiliar with the language in which he will speak. Before doing this I should like to make a few remarks about Rochefort himself at this his first presentation before an American audience. And I may say that I will use language about him which I would not use in his presence if he understood the language in which I speak, for in such case his modesty might enter protest. Rochefort's career in France has been extraordinary, brilliant and fruitful. Perhaps the well-worn metaphor of a meteor might be more aptly applied to him than to any of his French contemporaries, if it were not that I believed him to be a star, durable and potential, illuminating the horizon which sweeps from France to the Infinite, and from to-day to eternity. (Applause). It is but a few years since the young man Rochefort made his appearance in a Paris paper. As soon as he did so it was evident that here was not only a light of exceptional brilliancy and terrific wit, but a man of ideas and force of conviction, a republican and radical, a relentless enemy of the dominant despotism and an audacious and defiant champion of liberty. (Great applause.) It is not only that he was the wittiest of writers in the wittiest of cities, but behind his wit was a heroic spirit, and behind his personality was the genius of France. He quickly became the most famous writer in Paris, his productions eagerly sought by the whole people, his words in everybody's mouth; in a moment, as it were, he became the popular idol, the idol of the keen, quick-witted, true-hearted, bold-handed republican party of Paris, and of the masses of the French working people. Time soon gave him new opportunities. He emancipated himself from the *Figaro* and started the *Lanterne*, and first published it in Paris; it was there suppressed, and he then started it in Marseilles, but it was also suppressed in time by the imperial power, and he himself was imprisoned by the same power. Napoleon said Paris could not hold himself and Rochefort; one of them must get out. And it was true. His Imperial Majesty, as things happened, went out first. (Laughter and applause.) Rochefort stood firm throughout. He had never once changed his ground. He had been the most consistent of

POPULAR POLITICAL LEADERS,

and had confronted the enemy at every turn with the flag of republicanism in one hand and the quill of democracy in the other. (Cheers.) The spectacle was more than grandiose. But I need not speak of his genius, of his inspiration, his courage or his power to those who know his career. (Applause.) In describing Rochefort as a wit I beg you do not misapprehend the meaning of that thing in French or the part of this peculiar talent as it is played in French affairs. We are apt in this country to conceive of a wit as a joker, as a sort of Artemus Ward or Mark Twain, or even as the end man in a negro minstrel company. Be assured this is not Rochefort. Wit and satire was to him the most powerful and effective weapon of assault—a weapon before whom despotism was most helpless, a weapon whose flash was most lively to the spirit of republican liberty, and he used it as it had been used by Voltaire—to destroy those malevolent forces which have proved so disastrous for French humanity. Let those who imagine, if any such there be, that Rochefort is a mere corsair, look at his life and his triumphs. Let those who think he is a brainless adventurer, as one idiotic newspaper has had the audacity to suggest, tell me how he achieved his glittering fame, how he won his wonderful popularity, how he compassed his power—a power which rallied Paris and

STRUCK DOWN THE FRONT OF THE IMPERIAL DESPOT.

Let those who look on him as a mere revolutionist, as a revolution incarnate, listen to his ideas of organic politics. Let those who look on him as an impracticable visionary tell me why the republican voters of Paris elected him twice to the Assembly, once under the Empire and again under the Republic. Tell me, why the astutest republican leaders in France asked him to become a member of the Government of National Defence. Tell me why, during the siege, he was appointed Chief of Barricades. (Applause.) Rochefort has more than political sense. He has the genius of statesmanship, as I am convinced after intimate conversations with him. He was probably a revolutionist during the Empire; but give France a true republican government and Rochefort's constructive genius will be found equal to that of Cavour. (Applause.) But a few words more, in reference to one point about which Rochefort has been the worst misunderstood and the worst maligned man of the nineteenth century. I do not propose to go over any ground that he is to cover, so I will simply mention that Rochefort's course during the Commune has been as grossly misunderstood as the Commune itself. He upheld the Commune because it appeared to him to embody the true republican principle—(applause)—because the world must be regenerated; because it gave hope of a realization of those great organic reforms which the creative intellect of France, foreshadowed since the time of Henry IV.; because it proposed political justice and communal order—(applause)—emancipation from that peculiar

MEPHISTOPHELISM, THAT DIABOLISM

of modern France. (Laughter and cheers.) His enemies accuse him—and, gentlemen, I would as soon let Caligula represent the history of Christianity as let any reactionist represent the history of that sublime epoch of the Commune—they accuse him, I say, of being, during the revolutionary government, the leader and instigator of a mob of thieves, incendiaries, murderers and assassins. "Thieves?" Aye, though they stole nothing and never laid even a finger on the hundreds of millions of gold that were under their hands in the vaults of the Bank of France. (Applause.) "Incendiaries?" Aye, though it would not require the fingers of one hand to number the buildings that they were even accused of burning. "Murderers?" Aye, though there was not a single execution in Paris by order of the Commune during its brief existence, as Henri Rochefort can show. (Applause.) These diabolical falsehoods about this thing are indescribable, simply because it is only the murderer who was allowed to describe his victim. It was, fellow citizens, a sad thing that during the supreme moment of the tragedy of Paris, when for five days they had been slaughtering men, women and children by the 10,000; when holocausts of victims, chained together, were massacred by the mitrailleuse; when the maddened soldiery of McMahon were wreaking on the people of Paris the vengeance which they had failed to take on Bismarck's invaders—it is a sad thing, I say, that under such circumstances a few ecclesiastics were shot by the unauthorized orders of the sufferers, as General Lamonte had previously been shot. But it certainly was not wonderful, and, let it be remembered, against all such acts Rochefort never failed to enter his protest. One word in regard to the theme of Rochefort's discourse, which he wished me to announce. The main points will be four or five. He will begin by referring to his interview with the present King of the Sandwich Islands during his voyage as a refugee to this country. The vessel stopped there and he had an interview with the present King. Mr. Rochefort will state that he observed things in Hawaii and the adjacent islands, the society, government and ordinary affairs, and he will contrast

THE CIVILIZATION OF SAVAGERY WITH THE SAVAGERY OF CIVILIZATION.

(Applause.) Second, he will refer to the part that he himself took under the provisional government of September, where, with Favre and several others, that short-lived and

KALEIDOSCOPIC CONCERN WAS CREATED.

He will go on and state what has never been revealed—the facts in reference to the surrender of Paris, the visit of Jules Favre to Versailles, his interview there with Bismarck, the scheme for the surrender of the city and the results of that scheme, and certain extraordinary and heretofore unknown facts to which he is privy. In the third place he will dwell upon some abstract and philosophical speculations in regard to those who speak about the French being unable to keep a republic when they have got it—that they can establish nothing, and that sort of thing. Rochefort says, "Give the French a republic and you will see whether they will keep it or not." In the next place he will state that he has been accused by certain American newspapers of exaggeration in the statements he recently made in his published letter. They say its awful, blood curdling statements were phantasies of his *Lanterne* brain, that he has colored the incidents, &c., Rochefort will say, on the contrary, "I have heretofore been afraid to tell the truth. To-night, those things being denied, I will give you facts infinitely more terrible than those which I have stated," facts of which he is cognizant, and the material of which not M. Thiers nor MacMahon will traduce. In the next place he will speak of the people of Paris during the siege, referring especially to the magnificent conduct of the women of Paris—so superb, so courageous. For that purpose he will draw a portrait—I wish Victor Hugo were here to see it—a portrait of Mademoiselle Louise Michel, who was the grand heroine of that most amazing struggle for human nature, and now a prisoner in New Caledonia—present in the Courts of Justice, at the palace, at the barricades, wherever a gun or a piece of lint or a woman's heart was wanted. She was a teacher, a lady by training and education, some thirty years old. In the last place he will speak about the Republic. It is impossible to overthrow the Republic in France, as M. Rochefort will show. The Republic is in the heart of France, and the heart of France must be cut out before the Republic can be annihilated. (Applause.) Those wretched corsairs and reactionists cannot kill it. (Repeated cheers.) And now, gentlemen, in the superb language of France, in a style at once pure and sparkling, with a power and pungency of his own, I introduce M. Henri Rochefort and his discourse.

M. ROCHEFORT'S LECTURE.

When of late, after our happy escape, the steamer on board of which we were going back to Europe made a call at the Sandwich Islands, the King of that country, most probably anxious to become acquainted with French revolutionists, sent one of his aides-de-camp to beg the favor of spending the evening with us.

SANDWICH ISLAND ROYALTY.

My friend Olivier Pain and I accepted the queer invitation, well thinking that we were going to enjoy ourselves prodigiously at the expense of this Canak King, who, undoubtedly, would stupefy our republicanism by his Oriental despotism, his ignorance and his funny theories on divine right. Fancy how great was our astonishment, and, I must say, our humiliation, when we heard from those very royal lips, that the savages who, eighty years ago murdered with arrows Captain Cook, enjoy to-day a Parliament elected by universal suffrage and renewable every two years, in order that the representatives of the nation may be constantly in close accord with public opinion; that those savages were compelled to gratuitous and obligatory instruction; that fathers whose children were wholly uneducated in reading and writing were punished with prison and fine; that royalty was elective, and not hereditary, and did not leave to the Sovereign any other power than that of countersigning and promulgating the laws voted by the national Parliament; that the municipal councillors were nominated by the citizens, and, finally, that in the whole country there were about twenty public schools against one church. Thus the guarantees and liberties we claim from all our governments, which they always promise to grant us, but never give and sometimes compel us to take, are the very liberties and guarantees enjoyed without any discussion or control by the negroes of the Pacific Islands. We call them cannibals, while autocracy devours ourselves. We send them missionaries, while it is they who ought to send us political leaders. The King of the Sandwich Islands had hardly spoken to me for a quarter of an hour on his governmental views when I believed it was my duty to interrupt him. "Sir," said I, "your confidence to me cannot have any bad results for Your Majesty; but beware of ever going to Versailles and giving expression to such opinions, for you would be sure to be immediately

ARRESTED AND SENTENCED TO EXILE

in a fortress by all the courts martial, which are the finest ornament of our present government." Never, in effect, was there situation susceptible of comparison with ours. When we claim for France the rights consecrated among all the peoples of the universe, and which are for the soul of a nation what food is for the stomach of a man, then they call us levellers, and we are accused of aiming at pulling down everything. Pulling down what? We, who have nothing! To our anxieties, solicitations and propagandas they object only this word, as hollow as it is long—conservative! Let them grant us, once for all, as to the natives of the Sandwich Islands, the liberty o writing, of talking, of electing our municipal counsellors, of dying without a priest and of enjoying existence without a king, and you will see whether or not we shall preserve it. But, at the present time, of what can we be conservatives, since we are refused everything? After the revolution of 1870, just when the capital was on the point of being invested, the people, eternally accused of being ignorant by the very ones who systematically refuse to them the possibility of learning—the people were the true conservatives, for they would keep intact France, which so many others, reputed inborn conservatives, were ready to deliver to her foreign enemy. Who knows it, who was enabled to know it, better than I, when, on the 4th of September, I was taken out of my prison by the people, who brought me to the Hotel de Ville, where I consented to become a member of the government on the condition alone that this government should defend Paris? The famous truce of parties—of which the Versailist monarchists believe themselves the real inventors—had I not inaugurated it long before them, when I proposed for our power the denomination, which was unanimously agreed, of

GOVERNMENT OF THE NATIONAL DEFENCE?

I was ready to make every sacrifice. I had said from the first day to General Trochu:—"Promise to defend Paris energetically and on my side I promise to sustain you to the last—even against a popular rising." Well, will you know in what manner has been fulfilled the promise in which I candidly confided for a while? The month of September had not elapsed yet when M. Jules Favre opened secret negotiations with M. de Bismarck at Ferrières. Secretly, is the proper word, because I have to tell you a fact which

SOUNDS LIKE FABLE.

My colleagues of the National Defence concocted to deceive me not only as to the purpose of M. Jules Favre's journey, but even as to that journey itself. Not seeing him in the evening at the usual council of the government I inquired about the motive of his absence. They answered that he was sick, but that he would come the next morning to attend the council. The next morning I remarked again the absence of our Minister for Foreign Affairs and asked the same question, which provoked the same answer from my colleagues. I ought to confess that I fell so completely the dupe of that cunning trick that I sent my servant to the Ministry in order to get news from the sick Minister. It was only on the evening of that day, when I heard M. Jules Favre himself delivering a narrative of his trip to Ferrières, that I learned the thing which was the subject of every conversation in Paris, but which I, a member of the government, was the only one ignorant of—viz., that M. Jules Favre's alleged sickness was simply an

ASTOUNDING CAPITULATION.

Thus they were preparing to deliver up Paris, not consulting me, not even informing me of their intention, and when, disgusted with the boasting proclamation of which the authors did not believe a word, I retired from a government of defence whose members defended only their portfolios, they brought the accusation of treachery against me, whom they had constantly betrayed. It is this double dealing, those bellicose proclamations, continually belied by the facts; those broken promises, those deceived hopes, which drove Paris to a new revolution. The reactionists attempt to justify the most arbitrary measures with that phrase which has no sense—

"THE FRENCH ARE UNGOVERNABLE."

They are ungovernable only because they have had to contend successively with Louis XVIII., Charles X., Louis Philippe and Napoleon III., and because the sound politicians of Versailles pretend to impose upon them, to-day, Henri V., the Comte de Paris, Napoleon IV., or MacMahon, to govern them. But it always was the destiny of republicans (and so it will be till the day of definitive triumph) to be calumniated. Whatever we may do, bad faith is watching us in order to adulterate our best intentions. After the Commune the whole of the detective Catholicism urged that I should be burned alive as an atheist, because my father had been buried, through my orders, after his own will, without any priest of any religion; for, you see, that horrible civil war was also a religious war.

ROCHEFORT AS A CONVERT.

One year after those same Catholics announced, with a great noise, my conversion to their creed, because I married the companion of my youth, simply in order to comply with her dying desire, which was to receive the nuptial benediction. She was at the end of her life; the least contrariety might have

KILLED HER ON THE SPOT.

Then I could not refuse any longer to her that satisfaction, no more than I would have refused her a cashmere had her fancy been turned towards that object. Those who maliciously called me a convert to Catholicism would have called me an assassin had I acted otherwise. They know, without doubt, the reason why I did consent to that sacrifice; but it is part of their system to throw upon the most sincere republicans, with the purpose of dividing the party, suspicions of irresolution and of levity. The obscene *Figaro* had indeed dared to relate, with various amplifications, that my companions in confinement had wanted to rebel on account of particular favors which I enjoyed. I have never enjoyed any favor, and if I have anything to reproach myself with it is that I cannot show myself more worthy of the devotion which my comrades in misfortune and prison have never ceased to manifest towards me. They saw me suffer in the midst of them the same miseries as themselves, and if I had only listened to their entreaties I should have been free long ago. Two plots to escape were organized, one at the Castle of Ré, the other during the voyage, on the very deck of the frigate La Virginie, to the end that I might regain my liberty. They thought I should be more useful to the cause in Europe than in America, and they were resolved at all hazards to deliver me from the hands of my jailers. But the execution of the enterprise would have been in very truth thoroughly in proportion to its boldness, and I was in duty bound obliged to decline running a risk where so many brave people would have been compromised by their attachment to me, reserving to myself to take up this project when my life alone should be in question. Louis Veuillot, who made himself the doctor of souls, as the Zouave Jacob is the doctor of bodies—L. Veuillot, after having covered me with dirt, crowned me ironically with flowers concerning my marriage. His mud I accept, because it honors me. As for his flowers, I am obliged to return them to him, as I do not merit them. I ask your pardon for putting myself thus before you; but it is a continuation of the invention—that of which I have just made the *exposé*—which has compassed the official history of the last events. You can then argue from the particular to the general, and judge of the degree of impudence that human cowardice can reach when it believes itself out of danger.

THE HERALD STORY.

I had, besides, foreseen that they would tax with exaggeration the story sent by me to the NEW YORK HERALD of the sufferings and the tortures inflicted on our companions in exile. I believed in declaring immediately all the facts that I collected and made known to the indignation of the free people of America. I have in my hands the irrefutable proofs. What makes the difference between republicans and monarchists is that the first want the truth, as the second only live by lying. I have not written a word of which the exactitude cannot easily be established by numerous and unimpeachable witnesses. I have told but the truth, and the only reproach that can be brought against me is that I did not tell the whole truth, because the list of the miseries of the prisoners—both male and female prisoners of the Commune—is so cruelly long that there is no paper large enough to publish the list. The 20,000 prisoners who passed through the prisons of Versailles all knew two children of nine years of age—nine years, do you hear?—who, though frightfully mutilated in the hazards of the fight, were arrested and transferred to the depot. One of them, a little apprentice, had both his arms carried away by the bursting of shells. The other had one leg carried away at the beginning of the thigh. As soon as they were capable of bearing the voyage they were taken from the ambulance, these poor beings, all bloody, to mix them up with the other prisoners. And then—terrible spectacle, which would have touched the Sepoys of India—these two wounded little ones illustrated in action the well known fable of the blind and the paralytic. At every meal the child without a leg crouched down beside his friend without arms and made him eat. He took his clothes off every evening and dressed him in the morning. In return, the one who had his legs left did all the errands for his disabled comrade. These two children, whom the French law, inflexible as it may be, could not reach on account of their age, no one on earth had the right to retain as prisoners. The duty of the military administration was to return them to their families, which belonged to the doctor, and not to the Council of War. Well, it was only after six months that, ceding to the general indignation, the Chief of Military Justice consented to give both their liberty. When I say both I am wrong. The child without arms alone saw open before him the gates of the prison "Des Chantiers." But this poor little fellow gave his companions a lesson in charity and gratitude. "I will not go out," said he to Colonel Gailliard, "if the comrade who has helped me to live during the past five months is not given his liberty at the same time. Before such a generous resolution militaryism ought to yield and both went out, one dragging the other after him. The moment of their departure, however, was marked by an incident as painful as all the remainder. Never during his long captivity had the little printer, with both arms amputated, received from outside either help or visit.

"You are then an orphan?" said a prisoner to him, who afterward related the fact to me as he was crossing the threshold.

"No," replied the child; "I have a father and mother, but I sent them word not to venture near the prison, because I heard if they came and asked for me they would be arrested also."

THE HEROINE OF THE BARRICADES.

I made the voyage from France to New Caledonia on board the war frigate La Virginie, in a cage situated in front of the one occupied by Louise Michel, the celebrated heroine of the barricades, exiled at the same time as myself. Louise Michel is one of those women without fear and without reproach, whose religious faith made Joan of Arc, and whose republican beliefs, Théroigne de Mirecourt. After having fired the first shot at the outposts like the most intrepid soldier during the first and second siege she remained to the last hour in Paris, battling bravely against the Versailles army. The fight ended, she could have gone without being recognized or disturbed, but the energy of her resistance had made her name redoubtable to the government which trembled before women after having been palsed in presence of the Prussians. An order was given to hunt her up, and as some friends forced her to conceal herself, what do you think was done by Marshal MacMahon, Duke of Magenta, Commander-in-Chief of the Versailles troops? He felt no scruple at sending to arrest Louise Michel's old mother and retaining her as a hostage, warning her that she would be mercilessly shot within twenty-four hours if her daughter did not give herself up. Louise Michel did what might be expected of her great heart. She went and put herself into the hands of the soldiers with this single reproach on her lips, "Here I am. Shoot me down!" But I forbid you ever hereafter to reproach the Commune with the killing of the hostages. All France knows how she bore herself before the Council of War. She openly braved the cowards who were judging her. "I defy you to condemn me to death," she said; "because I will load you with shame in showing you how a woman can die." These brave runaways thought, sure enough, that exile in a strong fortress was death with less noise. Every month she writes to the members of the sinister Commission of Pardons to put under their nostrils the odor of the blood they have shed. It is well that a woman thus periodically troubles the peace of these frightful men who go to discuss at the bar of the Assembly the number of carcases that will be found the following day at the foot of the deathbed boards at Satory. This excellent and brave Louise Michel, whose inalterable sweetness makes such a touching contrast to her energy every day, deceived the watchfulness of the guards, who walked, revolver in hand, before her cage on board La Virginie, and passed me almost daily letters in which her faith in the republic rose to a serenity devoid of doubt. In the hold of the ship, with twenty-two of her companions, all exiled like herself, she passed four long months, never taking off her clothes in her hammock, she thought of nothing but the triumph of the cause of which she has made her religion and her unique love. Clothed, almost in the middle of the icebergs of the Pole, with a mean Indian robe that the government had granted her, and which was facetiously called the *corbeille de noces* of Monsieur MacMahon; insufficiently fed with salt meat and preserved vegetables, separated forever from her mother, whom she adored, she still found the courage to breathe upon her frozen fingers sufficient warmth to enable her to write to the Commission of Pardons. This appeal, in passing before my cell, she passed to me, and I have preciously guarded it. I now ask the permission to cite it to you.

SOUVENIR TO CITIZEN ROCHEFORT.

Copy of the letter sent from Virginia, in the Roads of St. Catharine, to the Commission of Pardons:—

MESSIEURS—You did well to prescribe that one could correspond freely with you by means of sealed letters. My thoughts will reach you thus from everywhere. They will follow you everywhere. There is too much blood between us for all the oceans to ever wash out, and your fatality brings me back to it. However, in Caledonia there will be a good opportunity to get rid of me; but you lack the courage. However, if in place of coldly assassinating, six months after the struggle you had banished us all, the colony would have been flourishing to-day, and you would not be murderers. Now try to wash your hands in the face of history. Goodby, Messieurs.

LOUISE MICHEL.

She added this postscript, which makes allusion to the names of the two ships-of war who were aware of our intention:—

"P. S.—You might have feared, perhaps, in sending us on the Sybille that this name would have brought you misfortune. You have chosen another presage. Virginia was fatal to the decemvirate."

Thrown to-day upon the sands of the peninsula Ducos, under the burning winds and mosquitoes of New Caledonia, she finds means still to renew courage and to prevent weakness. Whatever may be the opinions of those who listen to me, it is impossible not to bow before that force and that goodness of soul which make of a young woman the expression even of a sacrifice. The abnegation of those who are called the servants of Jesus Christ is often spoken of. Compare it, if you dare, with the devotedness of the servants of liberty. Besides, it should be known and proclaimed aloud that if our sex loses its prestige the grand examples during the foreign war, as during the civil war, came from the women. At my entry into the government of the 4th of September, when peculiarly preoccupied by the defence of Paris, I endeavored to encourage the people to resistance and to reattach to our cause General Trochu, this insupportable speechmaker, who, after having promised to die at his post, finally went down in the capitulation, in the reaction and nearly in the police—at this time, I say, when the Bazaines, the Ducrots and the Vinoys were preparing the drama of their treasons, there was not a day but some deputation of Parisian women came and asked me, who sent it to the most dangerous positions either to assist the fighters or to fight themselves. Later, when the situation, already so sombre, became more sombre yet, and when succeeding the Prussians' balls which burst on our houses, came French bombs, the women stupefied the conquerors by their temerity, their indifference to danger and what the great Victor Hugo calls "this sinister facility of dying," when chained together three by three, sometimes five by five they were directed by hundreds upon Versailles through the vociferations of a rabble drunk with blood. Young girls of eighteen were seen to reply to the howlings of this multitude by smiles, and the history of the martyrdom of the women of Paris, from the beginning of the war to the present time, would fill volumes. Nothing was spared to them in misery, in hunger, in cold, in insult. When after saving for a quarter of a year to devote a little money to their imprisoned brothers, their sons, their fathers or their husbands; when after a journey of fifteen miles, which they achieved on foot, followed sometimes by little children whom they led in their company, they arrived at Versailles, harassed, dusty, but happy in bringing a little comfort to the wretched sufferers herded together in the sewers, do you know what happened over and over again? That they were met with a disappointment from some inexplicable order, which no one would even take the trouble to try to explain, and it was announced to them then that their visits were suspended and that they must consider themselves fortunate to be allowed to retrace their steps to Paris. Besides, how many have succumbed to their punishment! No single day passed that some prisoner did not come to tell us with tears in his eyes, "I have just heard that my wife is dead." My turn came as did the others. One day, at the castle of Ré, I got a letter informing me that the mother of my children was at the last extremity. At the time of my arrest she had lived for four months at Versailles, in the bosom of her family, and was absolutely ignorant of everything that had been going on in Paris. She was none the less subjected to a scandalous arrest in the streets of Versailles, and dragged before the then Prefect of Police, General Valentine, who, coward, like a Bonapartist officer, as he was, heaped upon her for two hours abuse and threats in the presence of his staff, who much enjoyed the scene. At last, released from this drunkard she returned home, took to her bed and never again rose from it. I appeal to eternal justice, was there not here arbitrary arrest complicated by murder? And I, scarcely recovering from a tedious illness, was plunged to the inmost recesses of a little cell under the blow of a sentence of death, while they murdered my wife, who had been left defenceless. Have I not to-day, that I am free, every right to revenge on her assassin?

PERSECUTION OF THE FAMILIES OF THE EXILES.

The uneasiness caused in the minds of our conquerors by the determination of our women for the past three years has not yet subsided, and they have found a means to get rid of the wives of the men they have already transported. Very many ships have been chartered for the purpose of bringing to New Caledonia families seeking their *paterfamilias*. Those wives and children are promised at the authorized agencies organized for the purpose, and by the representatives of the government, immunity from personal harm, work at pleasure and a speedy fortune. Seventy victims caught at this delusion, and after a terrible voyage on the steamer Fénélon they landed on Caledonian soil, but found neither means of living, clothes nor work. It has been told to many transported to the Peninsula of Ducos, "Your wives and children will soon be here. You can have them when you meet them, but the government will not be responsible for their means of living, either to clothe them, feed them or to support them in any way." The exiles reply, "We are dying, many of us, of hunger. We have no chance to work, as tools or money to buy the same are debarred us. How then do you imagine we can support our families?"

"Well, that's your business and not ours," says the government: "all we know is that your wives and families, although not under sentence, must undergo the same penalties as the convicts themselves." And indeed the relatives who came of their own free will from France are in the hands of galley slave keepers. Women whom circumstances drive to manual labor need a special permit before they do so. Yet this is frequently refused them, and when granted it is good only for a day. They are prohibited, under penalty of imprisonment, to absent themselves more than twelve hours, and the least violation of those very arbitrary rules subjects them to being publicly posted in the most insulting manner. The adage

MAXIMO PUERO DEBETUR REVERENTIA

has there the queerest kind of meaning. Lovely children of thirteen, fourteen and fifteen years of age, who exiled themselves to be near their fathers, are called the most opprobrious names. Women of the best families and spotless reputation suffer the same insults. A gallant exile named Gardy, who earnestly desired to have the charge of our *cuisine*—that is of Oliver Pain, Paschal Grousset and myself—and whose pleasure it was to tell us so, received news from home that his wife and child had left there to join him at the peninsula of Ducos. At the arrival of the steamer Fenelon he wrote to the district Governor, asking him if his wife had arrived. Here is the answer, which we all saw posted on the walls:—"The party by the name of Gardy is hereby informed that no female consignment for him is on the Fenelon." It was just the same as if a yoke of oxen or a bale of cotton were in the question. In the same manner, by principle and by the most annoying measures, all industry and trade were put a stop to. And yet the administration of M. MacMahon, not content with starving the prisoners, went so far as to defame them. In the recent debate at Versailles on the question of deportation the Minister of Marine got up and, with mingled indignation and grief, said:—"It is useless to attempt to do anything for the transported prisoners. Compassion is lost upon them, as they refuse to work for a living."

THE PRISONERS' WORK.

Yet in March, 1872, 400 prisoners worked on embankments on the peninsula, and twice that number at the Isle of Vines, for the ridiculous sum of a franc a day. All this work suddenly stopped on the arrival of a secret despatch, received by M. De la Richerie on August 12, a copy of which despatch I am enabled to give. "Monsieur," it reads, "the expense of the deportation of prisoners during 1872-73, according to your report of last March, amounts to 600,000f. You must not think that such a sum can again be devoted to such a purpose. A convict has not the rights of a workman. In granting wages to the prisoners you revive the scandal of the national workshops of 1848." Such are the good faith of the government and the value of the attacks made on us. And with like sincerity they pretend to encourage agriculture in this colony. A few days before our escape, and the better to conceal our designs, my comrade, Olivier Sain, wrote to the military Governor of the peninsula a request for a piece of land. The request was couched in the prescribed terms, and the plot of ground in question seemed to be at our disposal, as the law ordered such a request to be immediately complied with. However that may be, a notice, without any explanation, was put up the next day, refusing the request. Considering the situation at that time, and on the eve of our departure from New Caledonia, you may imagine our mirth and laughter when we heard of this last folly of the government. Yet it showed that the authorities, far from encouraging praiseworthy efforts, let no opportunity pass to prove that military power is the enemy of progress. You see, not alone did my letter to the NEW YORK HERALD exaggerate nothing, but it lessened many things. I have made during the last three years a kind of voyage through the horrible, and, far from heightening the colors, there are questions that I have voluntarily ignored in order that I should not be accused of creating terror wantonly in the minds of my hearers. There is one, however, that has attracted such attention from great minds and large hearts, and that we have studied closely enough in New Caledonia to be able to throw an unexpected light upon it. This question is the one which Victor Hugo has so powerfully dealt with in his romance, "Les Misérables," that Eugene Sue has developed in the "Mysteries of Paris," and that many others have discussed without being able to solve; this is the question of the bagnes in consequence of a bloody violation of the law abolishing the punishment of death for political offences. Colonel Rossel, Gaston Cremieux and many others were shot. The same contempt for the penal code was the cause of men of letters and journalists, judged and condemned for press offences, to be sent to the galleys. Humbert, formerly editor of the *Marseillaise*, breaks stones on the road. Henri Brissac, who was editor of the *Vengeur*, is in a double chain, coupled with the chief of the Marseilles poisoners, the most dangerous man in the galleys. Lullier, a lieutenant of the navy, and for a moment a general of the Commune, has been in a dark cell for three months, with irons on his hands and feet, after having passed the whole time of the voyage in the bottom of the hold of the frigate Var, which transported him to the Island of Nu. No matter how unfortnate they are, the political prisoners of Peninsula Ducos and the Isle of Pines enjoy the liberty of movement in a prescribed space, and outside the insufficiency of the food and the badness of the climate, their sufferings are principally mental. Those of the prisoners of the Commune, which the chances of the courts-martial sent to forced labor, as being convicted of crimes under the common law, are subjected, under the stroke of the scourge, to physical tortures, which often made us shudder down there. The Isle Nu, situated opposite to and about eight miles from Peninsula Ducos, has been described to the public by our philanthropists as a succession of terrestrial paradises. The galley slaves, it was said, would leave Toulon, that city of humiliation and opprobrium, where the eyes of their countrymen followed them with fear and disgust, to go beneath the blue sky of the Pacific and cultivate the fields in a sort of half liberty. The contemplation of nature, the absence of temptation, would assist them to become reformed. After a short time they would have the privilege of getting married, and to get as a wedding present a piece of ground, the product of which would supply all their wants and those of their families. These men were to cease to be convicts in order to become proprietors. It is now fourteen years since transportation began to flourish, and we have received letters from Peninsula Ducos which have edified us regarding the position of the convicts of the Isle Nau. A young doctor of the navy, serving some time at the hospital of the penitentiary, repeated to me this funeral cry, made use of by an old dying galley slave:—"Oh, Doctor, why have we been sent here? I was so happy at Toulon. Toulon, indeed, for its convicts was a humiliation, but it was at the same time a control. Sentenced by the law, they suffered in accordance with the law under the eye of the whole of a great town, where the severity of the regulations could not degenerate at caprice. Who to-day would take the part of a convict dying under the lash 6,500 leagues from France? What goes on at the Bagne of the island of the horrible name cannot be told.

A Minister, questioned on this subject not long ago, replied and was applauded by all the humane part of the assembly, that corporal punishment had for some years been abolished at the Bagne. Twice a week, on Wednesday and Friday, the flogging is applied at the Isle Nu, and from the seabeach we could hear from afar the rolling of the drums which announced the executions of which death was often the end. However guilty a man may be, if he is not sentenced to capital punishment, no one has a right to kill him. Well, this right the Governor of New Caledonia invests himself with. All that he has thought of to cover up his responsibility is to delegate to be present at the punishment a doctor, who follows with his eyes the contortions of the punished, and stops the flogging when he believes the life to be endangered. The man is then carried to hospital, and as soon as he is set on his feet again they give him a receipt in full, with the rest of the blows which his condition had prevented him receiving. A convict named Caignol—we were at the neighboring isle of Ducos when this fact transpired—threw himself into the sea one dark night and managed to cross by swimming the two leagues which separated the island Nu from the mainland. Retaken after two days of enforced fasting, he was taken back to the Bagne and sentenced for the attempt at escape to fifty blows of the stick. But the doctor, no doubt, had something else to think of during the operation, for the convict Caignol died on the spot at the forty-fifth stroke. What I have just related is frightful, but has nothing incredible about it. What follows savors of the domain of dreams. We several times met on the mainland convicts detached, either to excavate wells or to herd cattle, and several among us remarked that for the most part their fingers were wanting on their hands. Three among them, like the three Calenders of the "Thousand and One Nights," who were each blind of the right eye, were questioned about this extraordinary appearance, and this is what one of the wretches said in reply:—"There is on this isle of Nu a chamber of torture. When the administration suspects any project of evasion or any conspiracy against itself a certain number of men are called into the torture room on whom a gardian places the thumb screws, which they squeeze until the accused avows. Often the men refuse to avow or know nothing. Then they are squeezed so tight to get something from them that the bones are crushed and the fingers fall off." He showed them his left hand, to which was wanting the first finger and the thumb, and his right foot, from which the toe had been amputated. This is how corporal punishment is abolished in the State Prison. This is how they seek to rehabilitate the criminal by contemplation of nature, and this is how I exaggerated the stories of the Caledonian hells. At first sight such audacious actions, such infamous things, such crimes, are great enough to make the most energetic despair of the future of the country where they can be committed with impunity. Let us not, however, be discouraged. These atrocities are the swan's song of the reaction.

MARCH OF THE REPUBLIC.

The monarchists evidently play their last card, and throw their last sticks in the wheels of the Republic. They know their theories to be so profoundly ridiculous that they no longer dare to expose them. To place on the throne a king who in the persons of his sons and grand can remain there 800 years, to refuse to generations which will succeed each other the right to replace this immovable monarch, this is an idea which has become in our day so fantastically unlikely that the most enthusiastic legitimists do not dare to place them forward in awe of its consequences. What shall we do with this King if he become insane, like Charles VI.? What will his dynasty become if he be sterile like Henry V.? The only government who can in future be protected from revolutions is precisely the one which is called the revolutionary government—that is to say, the Republic. All the agitations, all the intrigues, all the machinations of old parties will only render its necessity more evident. I have recently crossed this immense American prairie revealed by your great novelist, Fenimore Cooper. They told to me recently that sometimes herds of buffaloes, astonished to see their domains invaded by man and crossed by the locomotive, would meet in force, and would attack *à coups de tête* the railway trains. Strong as they were, their heads and their horns would be broken against the obstacle. Hardly at times, by force of obstinacy and fury, did they succeed for an instant in stopping the engine; but soon, quickly getting up steam, it would start again, stronger and more irresistible, leaving stretched on the rails the stupid beings which got in its way. In listening to these stories I imagined to myself the Republic. It also wished to cross, for the purpose of making it habitable and fertile, the desert of ignorance and of oppression. It also meets with beasts, brutish or scoundrelish, which endeavor to stop its way, even though they break their heads. It happens sometimes that she hesitates and is undecided in her march by these multiplied assaults; but she soon regains courage, and, breaking the crowd of her dispersed enemies, she continues majestically her way towards the goal, pointed to in advance, which is the triumph of right, of intelligence and of liberty.